

Technology Deployment Initiatives and Partnership Program

Request for Funding

FY 2002

FHWA Strategic Goal Area: Safety

Project Title: Reducing Wildlife/Vehicle Collisions

Problem Statement: Wildlife/vehicle collisions are an increasing safety and potentially life-threatening problem for humans and animals on all types of roads. The remote, rural nature of the roads in Western=s highway program may slow the response time for emergency services trying to reach injured motorists. In addition, remote areas usually provide ideal habitat for wildlife and therefore, the likelihood of encountering wildlife in these areas is high. Better detection and notification of the presence of animals on or adjacent to the roadway could increase a driver=s ability to avoid collisions. A recent Pooled Fund study will have effectiveness summaries on various techniques to reduce wildlife/vehicle collisions.

Proposal: Select from the results of the Pooled Fund study a technique to evaluate in the field. Probable alternatives include devices to detect and warn motorists of the roadside presence of wildlife or to deter animals from approaching the road when vehicles are present. These alternatives may also include tracking a particular species of animal to determine if there are roadside features that facilitate crossing and if certain species are deterred by varying levels of traffic. A selected alternative to reduce wildlife/vehicle collisions on one Federal Lands Highway project will be implemented during FY2002. The road-owner or road maintenance agency should agree to help monitor and maintain any equipment associated with the alternative. The expected output will be the final report within two years on the success or failure of the technique.

Benefits: Avoiding wildlife/vehicle collisions will result in reduced property damage, reduced medical costs, and a reduction in the loss of both human and animal lives. From a wildlife standpoint, collision avoidance is especially important for wide-ranging carnivores that take several years to reach breeding age and that exhibit low fecundity rates.

Resources/Cost: Depending on the alternative selected, \$100,000

Duration: One year for selection and installation and 2 years for evaluation and reporting. Implement an alternative on one project during FY2002 at a road that is experiencing high wildlife mortality or in an area that is prime habitat for an endangered species in which road mortality may be a contributing cause of population decline.

Organization/Method: Numerous vendors offer a range of wildlife detection and warning devices. Based on the Pooled Fund study results identify vendors, products, and cost. Select from a list of alternative approaches. Identify candidate locations based on high wildlife/vehicle collision rates, status of the target species, and customer input. Install a system for field evaluation, including data collection and reporting of results.

Submitter:

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